



# Operation RIO Update

16 January 2004

Everett Laney and a KBR engineer discuss blue prints for a pump at Khor Az Zubayr Port. ( U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Photo)

*An update for all SWD employees and Operation RIO volunteers supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.*

**Mission Update:** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced Friday, 16 January, that it has awarded two contracts for future work restoring the Iraqi oil infrastructure to pre-war production levels. The two new contracts complete the pre-war acquisition plan to replace the non-competitive contract with full and open competitive contracts.

Both contracts are Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) cost plus award fee 24-month contracts with three one-year options. The contract for work in the southern area of Iraq was awarded to Kellogg Brown and Root of Arlington, Virginia and the other for work in the northern sector of the country was awarded to Parsons Iraqi Joint Venture (Parsons with its teaming subcontractor Worley Group of Australia), Houston, Texas. The two contracts have no geographical overlap. Each will have a minimum value of \$500,000. As amended, the maximum value for the life of the contract for the northern oil fields will be \$800 million and for the southern oil fields will be \$1.2 billion. Those amounts are contract capacity amounts. The actual amount of the contract capacity that will be used will depend on the requirements based on conditions on the ground at the time and may or may not reach the contract capacity

The new IDIQ contracts will cover a full range of services. These include, but are not limited to, extinguishing oil well fires; environmental assessments and cleanup at oil sites; oil infrastructure condition assessments; engineering design and construction necessary to restore the infrastructure to a safe operating condition; oilfield, pipeline and refinery maintenance; procurement and importation of fuel products; distribution of fuel products within Iraq; technical assistance in marketing and sale/export; and technical assistance and consulting services to the Iraqi oil companies.

**Deployments/Redeployments:** Deployments: **Jerry Draggo**, NWW, 18 Jan; **Stacy Anderson**, ERD, 18 Jan; **Clark Roberts**, POJ, 18 Jan. Redeployments: **Mike McAleer**, NWP, 12 Jan; **James Holder**, SWT, 10 Jan.

## **A view from down range: Everett Laney**

Article and photos by Carolyn Vadino

*(Laney returned 6 Dec 03)*

When Everett Laney, a quiet park ranger turned wildlife biologist from the Corps' Tulsa District, arrived in Iraq back in August he was ready to go to work cleaning up the oil spills caused by the war. He quickly realized that his role as an environmental specialist also came with a crash course in cultural differences beyond language barriers and religion.

"The environment is not a primary concern of Iraq. They did not want us to come in and clean up the oil spills," he said "In our job, we have to look at all sides of the issue; prudence over right. Our mission is to help the Iraqi people, and if they don't want us to clean it up, we shouldn't force U.S. standards on them."

"It didn't turn out to be as bad as we thought it would be. There were only five wells on fire. We were expecting a lot more," he said speaking with the southern drawl of a man from Muskogee, Oklahoma. "The well fires were out by the time I got here and there wasn't as much spill damage as anticipated."

However, years of environmental neglect were scattered throughout the desert collecting into oil lakes and saturating the soil around the refineries, wells and pipelines.

So Laney spent his first two months shuttling between the tents of Camp Commando and the RIO Main Office in Kuwait to the 140-degree heat of the desert in Southern Iraq. He went from spill to spill, documenting location, significance and size. He filed enough paperwork to eventually close out that portion of the environmental project. His job as an environmental specialist was finished and he was only half way through his 120-day tour.



Being able to adapt to any situation, he immediately accepted a position as project engineer for the ports. He moved into the relocated RIO main camp at the Basrah International Airport, a British Royal Army Base Camp. His job was to work with the contractors to ensure the ports were functional enough to import and export product.

The route Laney has driven, usually solo (save for his security), to

the port is typical; children along the roadside, donkey carts crossing the road, patches of gardens here and there. The port, which is also a British Base Camp, has become a second home to Laney. He sometimes stops to give guards water, or to take a few pictures. Occasionally he'll stop to buy souvenirs from his friends the "bucca boys," a couple of Iraqi preteens that have set up a primitive stand near the entrance to Camp Bucca.

In his time on the job, he has formed valuable working relationships with those onsite, who greet him before he even removes the key from the ignition of his white Suburban.

"The ports were only set up to export. Before the war, the refineries were producing enough to provide fuel and heat to their homes," he said. "Now, the refineries are not able to do that because of the vandalism and sabotage that took place after the war. These lines are very important," he said "The people need the kerosene to heat their homes during the winter."

Laney would like to see diesel or kerosene imported before he goes home. His crew has finished one of the two import lines they've been tasked, but so far Baghdad hasn't brought in a ship. The other line should be completed within a few weeks after he leaves.

"It's like any other Corps job. You do whatever you can to get the mission done, even if you have to get out of your area of expertise," he said speaking of his time in Iraq.

And Laney's 24 years with the Corps spans a wide variety of expertise. For 12 years, Laney was a park ranger in the Tulsa District, where he dealt with recreation and resource management, contracts, construction, inspections, navigation, public relations, and anything else that needed to be done at the lakes. Eventually, he decided it was time for a change and transferred to the district office as the wildlife biologist for Operation Division.

After a few years in the district office he decided, twenty years after getting his bachelor's in wildlife biology, to go back to school, where he earned his master's in environmental science.

As biologist in Tulsa, Laney works to ensure that the natural resources and the Corps projects co-exist amicably along the 38 lakes situated on the nearly 1.2 million acres of land and water in his home district. While he has enjoyed his mission here, working with contractors and Iraqi Nationals towards the overall goal of getting oil production restored, he is ready to return home. There, he says, he looks forward to seeing his wife and two sons.

"I also miss vegetation," he said while staring into the miles of endless desert during one of the many drives he has taken to the Kohr Az Zubayr Port. "I miss trees. I want to spend time in the woods and do some serious deer hunting."

He is also ready to resume his position as an adjunct instructor at Bacone College where he teaches night classes in ecology, biology, general physical science and environmental science.

"I am definitely going to tell my students about my experiences here," he said. "I have already put together a slide show of various photos that illustrate the years of environmental neglect."

**"HOOAH!!"**

*Robert Crear  
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